

# 11 Tips for Redirecting Focus

Your students with ADHD are drifting away. One is daydreaming; another is whispering to a neighbor. Your first instinct might be to call out their names. Don't. Children with ADHD often feel out of place and disliked. Singling them out can embarrass them and drive their thoughts further from your lesson. Instead, try these strategies...

<b>1</b>	<b>Walk around the class while teaching.</b> Randomly tap on students' desks with the eraser end of a pencil, so as not to draw attention to the tapping. Make sure to tap on the desk of the student with ADHD. By randomly tapping on several desks, you don't draw attention only to the student with ADHD.
<b>2</b>	<b>Provide or allow the child to use a rubber ball or another fidget device that doesn't make noise.</b> Many children with ADHD find it easier to focus if their hands are busy.
<b>3</b>	<b>Gently touch the student's shoulder.</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Use the student's name in your lesson</b> —name a character after him, or use her name in a sentence.
<b>5</b>	<b>Send the student on an errand.</b> If you don't have any errands to do, write on a piece of paper, "Please smile and say thank you to John and send him back to class." Staple it together and ask him to take it to the school office, library, or nurse.
<b>6</b>	<b>Start a discussion about the lesson to make it more interactive.</b> Look for points in your lesson to ask questions that will prompt discussion or opinion sharing. It is easy for a child with ADHD to drift off or become distracted when only the teacher is talking. Bringing more people into the lesson creates variety and interest.
<b>7</b>	<b>Establish eye contact with the student, and speak while looking at him.</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Ask the entire class to stand up.</b> Say, "We have been sitting for a while. Please stand up right next to your desk." Have the students jump up and down, touch their toes, raise their arms, and stretch before sitting down again.
<b>9</b>	<b>Use a secret signal</b> —touching your ear or saying a particular phrase—to attract the student's attention.
<b>10</b>	<b>Walk around the classroom and pause at the student's desk.</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Stand close to the student's desk.</b>

## ADHD-Friendly Lesson Plans

- > Incorporate the student's interests into the lesson—use sports metaphors or references to music.
- > Start by giving a summary of the lesson, and summarize it again at the end.
- > Engage the students' senses during class.

- For example, have them feel swaths of muslin or wool to better understand clothing worn during the 18th century.
- > Make lessons interactive by using pictures or flash cards.
- > Add movement to lessons when possible.

- For example, you might ask your students to touch their toes while reciting math facts, or to walk around the room while spelling words.
- > Ring a cowbell to signal the start of a new lesson or topic.